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the WORLD COUNCIL of CHURCHES (in process of formation)
the INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY COUNCIL
the WORLD ALLIANCE for INTERNATIONAL FRIENDSHIP THROUGH THE CHURCHES
the WORLD ALLIANCE of YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATIONS
the WORLD'S YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION
the WORLD'S STUDENT CHRISTIAN FEDERATION
the WORLD COUNCIL of CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

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Fifteenth Year

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Amsterdam Special

Youth at the Assembly

The invitation of one hundred young people to the first Assembly of the World Council of Churches, according to Miss Jean Fraser, Secretary of the Youth Department of the Council, is "surely not an act of grace on that part of the Committee which invited them. It is sound strategy".

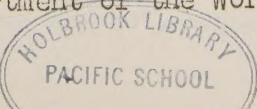
More than fifty of the one hundred have already accepted the invitation. The selection of those to be invited is done by the youth organisations in the various countries. All of the youth selected will be under thirty years of age. The average of those registered is 25 years. They will come from the various Churches, represented in the World Council, and, therefore, from a wide geographical area.

Among those who have already accepted we find three theological students; two art students; one medical; one studying law; twelve who list themselves only as students; ten young pastors; one instructor in sociology; one professor of theology in a Seminary; one University teacher; one practising attorney; one in business; one builder; one with a Foreign Office; one lists herself as a D.P.; one secretary of girl's work; one parish worker; one Y.W.C.A. and one Y.M.C.A. worker; one associate secretary Inter-Seminary movement; one Ecumenical Youth secretary; one secretary of the Student Christian Movement; others have not designed their work or profession. Forty-three are young men; nine are young women.

In addition to these youth delegates there will be a small international group of young people serving as ushers at the Assembly.

Programme

The youth delegates will have the opportunity of attending the Assembly worship services, the plenary sessions and public meetings. In addition they will divide into groups to discuss the subjects of the sections. Meetings to consider the affairs of the Youth Department of the World Council of Churches will be held.



The Dutch Church Youth will hold a youth rally to which the Assembly youth are invited.

In order to prepare themselves for the programme of the Assembly the youth delegation will meet for two days immediately preceding the Assembly.

The entire youth delegation will be especially interested in the decision of the Assembly as to the future of the Youth Department of the World Council of Churches. The young women will listen with keen interest to the discussion on one of the "Concerns of the Churches", namely that of "The Place of Women in the Church".

E.P.S. Geneva

CHINA

Model Agricultural Lepers Colony

Land has been purchased and plans are under way for the establishment of a model agricultural lepers colony, the first of its kind throughout China, at Hangchow, Chekiang Province. The project is to be sponsored jointly by the American Mission to Lepers and the Mission to Lepers of London, and will have the strong backing of Chinese Christians in Hangchow. Land for the new colony is being given by Mr. K.L. Dzen and other members of the Christian community.

The new colony will have accommodation for 200 patients and will follow the pattern of "Happy Villages" successfully established in India and Nigeria. Through the development of craft industries, animal husbandry, and scientific farming, the colony will eventually become self-supporting and self-sufficient.

China, with its estimated million leper victims, has long been in need of adequate leper control centres. Missionaries have maintained in many parts of China a number of asylums for the care of the more helpless advanced cases that have come to their attention; but the difficulty of obtaining land, and popular indifference to leper as a public health problem have hitherto delayed the establishment of the "Happy Village" type of leper community found highly effective in other parts of the mission world.

E.P.S. Geneva

KOREA

Appeal for More Christian Literature

Addressing the annual meeting of the Committee on World Literacy and Christian Literature of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America in New York, Dr John W. Decker, secretary of the International Missionary Council, who returned recently to the United States from a tour of the Far East (see E.P.S. No. 16) reported that 85% of all literature distributed in Korea is published by the Communist Press.

Christian literature programme in Asia, said Dr Decker, is hampered by a scarcity of paper and a "lack of understanding that the battle being fought in this continent is primarily for the control of men's minds".

"In planning production of Christian literature for mass distribution we must bear in mind that literature loses much of its appeal if it is strained through four or five theological sieves", explained Dr Decker. "What we need are

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Model Agricultural Paper Colony

Land has been purchased and plans are under way for the establishment of a model agricultural paper colony, the first of its kind throughout China, at Hanchow, Chekiang Province. The project is to be sponsored jointly by the American Mission to Japan and the Mission to Japan of London, and will have the purpose of helping Chinese Christians in Hanchow. Land for the new colony is being given by Mr. A.L. Dean and other members of the Christian community.

The new colony, which will follow the pattern of "Happy Village," another such colony established in India and Nigeria, through the development of rural industries, small husbandry, and scientific farming, the colony will eventually become self-sufficient and self-sustaining.

China, with its estimated 450 million paper victims, has long been in need of adequate paper control centres. Missions have been established in many parts of China a number of years for the care of the more helpless widows and orphans have come to their attention, but the difficulty of obtaining fuel, and paper, indifference to paper as a public health problem have hindered their efforts. The "Happy Village" type of paper community is now being established in other parts of the mission world.

Appeal for More Christian Literature

Addressing the annual meeting of the Committee on World Literature and Christian Literature of the World Christian Conference at Tokyo recently in New York, Dr. John W. Beckwith, secretary of the International Missionary Council, who returned recently to the United States from a tour of the Far East (see M.B.C. No. 16) reported that 95% of all literature distributed in Korea is purchased by the Communist Press.

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independent Christian writers and independent publishers, who can look at the work of Christianity as a whole and not from a strictly denominational point of view." Dr Decker praised the recent establishment of the Council of Christian Publishers in Shanghai (see EPS No. 14), interdenominational organisation comprising 16 Protestant bodies and urged formation of similar groups throughout the world.

The necessity was stressed by the editor of the "China Christian Farmer" in Shanghai for the Church to have "a positive programme derived from the problems and needs of the underprivileged and oppressed masses of people". E.P.S. Geneva

GREAT BRITAIN

The Archbishop of York on Religious Liberty

On May 5, the Archbishop of York delivered a speech in the House of Lords proposing a motion on the instructions given to the British Government's representative on the United Nations' Commission of Human Rights.

"I believe, said Dr Garbett, that there are universal human rights and that they are based on definitely Christian grounds, namely that all men are of value in the sight of God, they have been created to do His will, to obey Him, to love Him, and to live in fellowship; and unless they have freedom they cannot fulfil the purpose of their existence".

The Archbishop sees four groups of human rights which should be recognised: personal liberty of the individual; economic and social rights, such as right to work, the right to marriage and family life, the right to education; freedom of expression both for individuals and communities; and lastly, freedom of religion.

"The proposed article of the draft Covenant (see EPS No. 47, 1947), remarked Dr Garbett, is very comprehensive... and very satisfactory, with the exception of one omission. In the original draft there was a statement expressly permitting the right 'to endeavour to persuade other persons of full age and sound mind of the truth of his beliefs'. The phrase now in the draft 'to manifest any religious or other belief' is hardly sufficient. To the Christian the claim to propagate the Gospel, and to attempt to make converts, is inseparable from his faith.

"The form of words used is of quite secondary importance provided it is made perfectly clear that this right is claimed both for Christianity and for all religions. We admit, of course, that this right is not unconditional. Religious propaganda must not be a danger to public order nor an excuse for subversive movements; the Church in exercising its religious freedom must use restraint and, except when conscience forbids, obey the State."

The Archbishop emphasised the importance of insisting on religious freedom because this freedom is threatened in some directions, especially in Moslem lands. In Pakistan there is reason to believe that it will be respected, but in Egypt Christians and Jews are suffering from various forms of discrimination. Protestants in Spain complain that they receive inadequate protection in the exercise of their worship, and Roman Catholics assert that in the Balkans and East European countries they suffer from disabilities.

"I stress the importance of religious freedom, declared Dr Garbett, for its violation strikes most deeply at man's conscience; and when there is no religious freedom and man's right to worship and teaching according to his conviction is endangered, then all the other human rights are threatened."

How should human rights be generally accepted and protected? "Although I am profoundly suspicious of the value of the great majority of the statements which public men are frequently urged to sign" history shows that "declarations drawn up after months of deliberation and signed by responsible representatives of the nations have had an appreciable influence on subsequent events. But the declaration by itself would be insufficient... What is most required at the present time is an international conscience; without this, declaration and covenant will be of little value."

E.P.S. Geneva

Mr. Myron Taylor and the World Council of Churches

The General Secretariat of the World Council of Churches asks us to publish the following statement:

Mr. Myron Taylor, personal representative of President Truman to the Vatican, has recently visited at the request of the President several officers of the World Council of Churches to discuss with them how the Amsterdam Assembly may best serve the interests of peace. The World Council leaders explained to Mr. Taylor that in preparing for Amsterdam the Provisional Committee has given very serious consideration to this aspect of the Assembly's task but that the Churches which will be represented at the Assembly desire to accomplish this task in complete independence. The Churches consider that it belongs to the very nature of their mission that they should not be identified with any secular powers or policies and believe that they serve the interests of peace best when they speak exclusively in the name of the Lord of all nations. That is also why no invitations have been sent to any governments to be represented at the Assembly. But the problems of the present international situation will be fully discussed at Amsterdam in the light of Christian faith and principle.

The World Council leaders also pointed out that they had worked for years on the problem of making the Amsterdam Assembly as inclusive as is consistent with the specific Christian and ecumenical purpose of the World Council. In this matter political considerations play no role and the only question is whether the Churches concerned are ready to cooperate with their sister-Churches on the Christo-centric basis of the World Council of Churches. True ecumenicity knows no political or national boundaries.

E.P.S. Geneva

INDIA

Famine Situation in South India

Rev. E.D. Lucas, Church World Service director for India and Pakistan, reports that the famine situation in South India is so bad that "it must take priority over the refugee problem either in India or Pakistan... Ten million people have not had this year, and will not have for the rest of the year, one full meal a day". Relief headquarters will be set up at Madras and supplies will be sent to distribution centres in the Ramnda, Tinnevely and Coimbatore districts.

E.P.S. Geneva

GERMANYLooking towards the Eisenach Assembly

In view of the Assembly of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD) which will be held in Eisenach from June 25 to 29, two resolutions have been passed by the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Saxony and the Fraternal Council of the Silesian Confessional Synod.

Concerning the Synod of Saxony, the following message is quoted from the report of Bishop Hahn: "In these times of distress the Church has realised three things. The first is that the Church must remain a Church. Secondly, to quote Karl Barth's 'Dogmatik': 'The Church has not to ask what message this generation wants to hear from us, but what is God's message to this generation!'. Thirdly, we have learnt to obey God rather than men."

Regarding the constitutive Assembly of Churches in Eisenach, the Synod of Saxony declared its readiness "to become affiliated with the EKD, which is an association of confessionally-determined Churches". But "it cannot make a formal decision until the EKD has drawn up its final basis".

Its attitude to the VELKD (United Lutheran Evangelical Church) is clear from the following statement: "The Synod of Saxony cannot take the formal decision to join the VELKD until this body has decided upon the final form of its constitution."

The Fraternal Council of the Confessing Synod of Silesia met in Cörlitz at the beginning of April, this being its first plenary session since the war. Work was resumed with the unanimous conviction that "the tasks of the Confessing Church are by no means completed". The Fraternal Council of the Confessing Synod of Silesia is therefore planning to hold a conference for the Confessing Church of Silesia on May 30, at which the most burning questions confronting the Churches today will be discussed. A resolution concerning the refugee problem has been sent to the Fraternal Councils of every province. It reads as follows:

"Through the external distress and persecution of the last few years, the Silesian Church has been led to take the path of a confessing Church. Both pastors and church members have learnt, through the breakdown of all external security and all church organisation, to rely solely upon Jesus Christ as the only Word of God and to obey Him... God has blessed this way of obedience with an unimagined wealth of living faith, unselfish love and cheerful work in the service of the Church. The Confessing Church therefore feels responsible for all the scattered members of the Silesian Church, inasmuch as they in exile share the same consoling experience that the Word of God is the only way out of their despair. The Silesian Church will not feel freed from this responsibility until its members can live as active Christians in their new homeland..."

The resolution speaks of the latest experiences: "Through its sufferings during the church struggle, and through separation from homeland and friends, the Confessing Church of Silesia has come to realise that every living Church can pass on its way towards man's eternal home only through trust in God's Word. Having lost its connections with its earthly homeland, the Silesian Church does

not think that its task consists in preserving the customs of the German Church among these people in exile, or in forming special refugee communities. It regards its special task rather as that of helping its members, in their poverty and homelessness, to show the inhabitants of their new country that "the Church belongs to God alone, and lives solely through His consolation and through His guidance until His return."

The Hamburg Synod also approves the draft basis of the EKD, and hopes that in its final form it will open the way to real, living unity among the Churches. The Synod approves the union of the Lutheran Churches with the VELKD on condition that "the unity of the EKD is assured".

E.P.S. Geneva

POLAND

Archbishop Dionysius Waledynski Deposed

According to the Religious News Service, Archbishop Dionysius Waledynski, 74-year-old head of the Orthodox Church in Poland, has been deposed from office by a government decree depriving him of official state recognition. The decree does not specify the reasons for this action. Archbishop Dionysius was reported confined to his palace in Warsaw in "self-imposed isolation", pending a Church council meeting to elect his successor. Slated as the new head of the Church is Archbishop Timoteus of Bialystock.

E.P.S. Geneva

Problems Facing the Christian Enterprise in Asia

Addressing the staff of the World Council of Churches on his return from his journey among the Churches of East Asia, Bishop Stephen Neill recently spoke of his impressions concerning the whole Christian enterprise in that part of the world. Bishop Neill felt that, in spite of the immense difficulties that face them, the Churches of Eastern Asia showed a spirit of hope and determination. Everywhere he noticed that Christians had a sense that their people needed a spiritual basis and unity, in view of their new national independence, which the traditional religions were not able to give them. He gave two striking instances of success in the preaching of the Gospel. The first was among the "head hunters" of Formosa where an old woman and a young man by their steadfast witness, had brought large numbers to a belief in the Gospel. In Celebes, in Indonesia, a young Moslem convert, working amongst his own people, had won three or four thousand persons to the faith.

In China, on the other hand, there was a strengthening opposition to the Christian Gospel, mainly due to the spread of Communism. The Communist technique was to penetrate into rural areas, leaving in many cases the cities isolated. Chinese Christians were sharply divided in their attitude towards Communism. Some of them, especially the younger, impressed by the Communist policy of giving agricultural workers a stake in the land, were inclined to look upon their advance as being for the ultimate good of the country. The older Christians, generally, were convinced that in Communist controlled areas organised Christian life was becoming impossible and that the Communist advance was a terrible menace for the future of the Church. There had been instances of persecution, sometimes brutal and cruel, of Christian workers.

Speaking of his impressions of Japan, the Bishop reminded his hearers that to declare that the war was "a mistake" was different from repentance. The Japanese as a whole had small appreciation of the immense wrongs that they had inflicted upon so many Asian peoples, and there did not seem to be any basis for a new national life. He referred to the organisation unity among Christian groups that the Japanese war government had brought about, not only in Japan, but also in the Philippines, in Indonesia and elsewhere. When the pressure of the Japanese government was withdrawn, those Churches which had a more highly developed doctrine of the Church had left this unity, though several Churches were still remaining together. There was the same need in Asia, as in the West, for the faithful, for steady seeking of the basis of true Christian unity.

In the Philippines and also elsewhere a serious problem was the existence of Christian groups sponsored from abroad with a strong individualistic tendency that lacked a sense of the unity of the Church.

Speaking of some of the outstanding needs for the Christian enterprise Bishop Neill stressed the paramount requirement for a strengthening of missionary work in many parts of Asia, particularly in view of the great openings which were before the Churches. In Japan, for example, there were only some 300 Protestant missionaries, whereas the Roman Catholic Church had 3,000 foreign workers ready to take up the work. The same was largely true in other countries. There was a great need also for the strengthening of the quality and training of Christian ministers. In several countries the laity were in advance of the ministry in education. People still relied upon the older pre-war leadership, and younger men were not coming forward sufficiently to take their places.

Throughout East Asia Bishop Neill found a great interest in the ecumenical movement. The Churches in that part of the world were looking for full fellowship within that movement with the rest of the Christian world. In planning for the development of the East Asia office of the International Missionary Council, the World Council of Churches would need to keep this desire always in mind, that in any such organisation, contact should not be lost with the other parts of the world Christian family.

E.P.S. Geneva

Report of the World Conference of Christian Youth - Oslo 1947

Copies of the Oslo Report in German may be had on application to the Jugendkammer der Evangelischen Kirche Deutschlands, Darnleckerstr. 36, Stuttgart.

A limited number of copies in French are at present being printed in France and will be available soon from the Geneva office of the World Council of Churches, 17 route de Malagnou.

The report in English is still available at the Geneva office of the World Council of Churches. Price Sw.fr. 4.-

E.P.S. Geneva

"In an Age of Religious Emulation"

An important article on the ecumenical problem, with the above title, has appeared in the Belgian Roman Catholic review "Nouvelle Revue Théologique" (April 1948). The author is Mgr Chevrot, curate of Saint-François Xavier in Paris.

He writes: "Only God can restore the unity which we have destroyed." We can already see His first response to the prayers of Christians. It is an experienced fact that those divided Christians, who realise more intensely the importance of unity, immediately attach themselves more closely to Jesus Christ. "Instead of thinking themselves superior to members of other groups, they share the same ambition; that all who claim the name of Christian should be better hearers and followers of Jesus Christ... This simultaneous sense of remorse, of desire and of prayer" is an action of the Holy Spirit.

The goal before us is the resoration of the Body of Christ. "It is clear that the restoration of the unity of the Church will not be effected through individuals returning to the Roman Catholic faith... The problem of conversion is on an entirely different plane from that of ecumenism". This restoration must be thought out and prepared in relation to the whole community, and its sole motive should be the Churches' mutual desire to be absolutely loyal to the teaching of Jesus Christ. Unity is impossible unless everyone sincerely accepts the same truth. In the past certain non-Roman groups envisaged reunion based on a common denominator, consisting of a few dogmas recognised by all, while admitting the possibility of doctrinal diversities; but this conception of ecumenism is out-of-date. It is no longer a question of union, but a question of unity. "This unity is the purpose of the big ecumenical conferences... The only victory at which one aims is the victory of Jesus Christ, to Whom we are united by the charity which links us to one another."

The first thing to be done by the Christians of every Church, so as to open their hearts to the light of the Holy Spirit (the only power which can overcome our differences) is prayer in love. There must be no clever tactics, and no ulterior motives of proselytism.

"Our Roman Catholic theologians, and historians are already sharing in this parallel work... What reason is there to think that Catholic theology has said its last word on every point? Is the work of the Holy Spirit accomplished once and for all within the Roman Church? It hardly seems so. Has not the Holy Spirit through the centuries revealed to us new aspects of the apostolic revelation?... The explication of dogma, which shocks so many of our Protestant brethren, seems to us to prove the vitality of the divine Word. Why should we not hope that this dogmatic progress may be revealed with regard to the points on which we disagree? One thing is certain: that the answer will come from the Holy Spirit; all that we can do is to prepare ourselves to await that answer.

"We must turn our eyes to the future". We must not think of the restoration of the Church as a restoration of the past. The One Church will not be the Church of the 9th century nor the Church of the 16th century. Let us try by analogy to visualise the essential features of the restored Church. "We refuse to consider the Catholic Church as a separate group; it remains the one, universal

Church. Nevertheless, owing to the mutilations suffered by its body, it has become smaller and more centralised, its members being chiefly of Latin origin... Since the secessions of the 16th century, a general renewal has taken place within Catholicism in faith and in the evangelical virtues, and a remarkable growth in spiritual life and in missionary fervour... The groups which left the Catholic Church have also developed along the lines which were the cause of their disaffection. But we should not under-estimate the importance of the development in quality which has taken place, nor deny that it is the work of the Holy Spirit... Certain Christian values, which are all part of our common heritage, have reached a high degree of perfection in some of these groups.

"When God sees that the time is ripe, the unity of the Church will come about quite naturally, when Christians believe fully in the sole truth taught by Jesus Christ, and under the supreme authority of Peter's successor. Then the whole world will echo his confession: 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God'."

Christians are also drawing closer together in their religious behaviour. The Roman Catholics are returning to the Bible. The Protestants are celebrating Holy Communion more frequently. In the field of theological study, Protestant exegesis is becoming dogmatic and Catholic dogmatics are becoming exegetical. In the spheres of liturgical life and of Church fellowship, the participation of the lay Christian in the service of Jesus Christ is another example of spiritual emulation. And should we not regard the creation of the World Council of Churches as an attempt to tighten up the authority of the ministry - the authority being a divine institution? Are not these proofs "of what emulation may achieve in the will to be loyal to Jesus Christ?"

E.P.S.Geneva

SWEDEN

Swedish Churches' Initiative in the Cause of Peace

Leaders of the Swedish Churches have sent telegrams to President Truman, Mr. Attlee and General Stalin, urging them "to meet and discuss means of averting the threat of war". The telegram points out that "the people want peace, and so do their political leaders", and that common effort in the cause of peace is essential for the healing of the nations. The three statesmen are therefore urged to make these efforts "in the name of Christianity and of humanity". The telegram is signed, on behalf of the Swedish Church, by Archbishop Erling Eidem and Bishop Manfred Björkquist. It also bears the signatures of representatives of the Swedish Mission Union, the Swedish Baptists, the Swedish Methodist Church, the Salvation Army, the Quakers and others.

In addition the representatives of the Churches in Sweden have sent a message to the Christian Churches in England, in Soviet Russia and in America, and to the Christians in Sweden itself, urging them to cooperate in efforts for peace and in prayer for peace.

E.P.S.Geneva

